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DDI #05632-85
20 November 1985NOTE TO:

C/PES/MPS

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FROM: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT: Your Note of 8 November on Quality Product

1. I have thought about questions related to the research product and the research program more generally.

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2. First of all, relevant to the research program, I am concerned that the research program now is reverting to a kind of rote exercise such as existed in the past in preparation of production plans. That is, managers go around and find out what their analysts want to work on, add to this some ideas from their conversations with policymakers, and presto a research program emerges -- albeit as something of a Potemkin village.

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3. I'm inclined to believe at this point the way we should approach the research program for 1987 is first to ask the office directors to provide a substantive analysis on what the office sees as the major trends in its area over the next five years or so and the principal intelligence issues that flow from that. This report would draw substantially on discussions not only with senior policy people but with academics and others. We would then set about creating a longer term strategic approach to dealing with these issues, with the most concrete part of it being the research program for the next year.

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4. The write up in the research program would suggest this longer perspective so that we can see how the projects proposed for the coming year are informed both by a dialogue with policymakers but also by a longer term view. This would need to be done on a more topical or functional basis by OGI and OSWR.

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5. I'm really worried that after doing five of these research programs, it is becoming too much of a paper exercise. Moreover, it is clear from our talks with the SSCI that they are very concerned about the need for a longer term strategic

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approach to the kinds of problems we're looking at. These "look ahead" reports also would help to guide the collectors in their long range planning. [redacted]

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6. In terms of reporting on quality, the questions you've identified in the reports that we discussed a couple of weeks ago seem to be good ones. I would like to find a way somehow to incorporate something about feedback from the policymakers and the on going dialogue with policymakers. I am concerned that the office directors have become lax in their discussions with their assistant secretary counterparts, particularly when it comes to reviewing specific products. However, I don't know how to array that statistically or as part of a report on the research program. [redacted]

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7. Of the questions that you list, I would include all of them. I am most interested in outside review, papers that cut across office lines, multidisciplinary papers and multiauthor papers. [redacted]

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8. I hope these thoughts are of some use to you as you prepare for the December report and the January management conference. I probably will talk about the research program in office calls and staff meeting next week. But it is something for you to think about as well. [redacted]

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Rf.

Robert M. Gates

DDI/RMGates/[redacted]

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DATE: November 8, 1985

NOTE TO: Robert M. Gates
Richard J. Kerr

SUBJECT: QUALITY Product

To prepare for a report to you on DI product in December and to your yearly conference with Office Directors in January, we have begun experimenting with reporting formats and graphics. We would be aided in this if you would pass to us questions you most want answered about our research product. For example, how much of DI product in 1984 had a global or regional focus? Which were the top ten countries in frequency of treatment? What percent of our product involves more than one office in the authorship? As you deal with Congress, budgets and quality review and these questions occur to you, please pass them to us, and we'll see if we can answer them.

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